**Soweto Uprising/Protests**

In the early 1970s, South Africa was in a time of rising tensions and increasing dissatisfaction in townships. There were several factors that caused this:

- Increasing dissatisfaction in townships a result of urbanisation/housing shortages
- Oil crisis in 1973, negative effect on world and SA
- Shortage of skilled labour (Bantu Education)
- Strikes (Durban and East Rand) resulted in greater recognition for black trade unions
- Independence in Angola/Mozambique, ANC in exile could establish closer bases
- Former Portuguese colonies liberated

These factors led to an increasing bitterness towards the government from the people of South Africa. This developed into full-blown protest due to the following factors and characteristics:

- Youth bitter and unhappy about Bantu Education (prepared blacks for unskilled labour, schools poorly equipped, teachers badly trained, high dropout rates, low govt. Funding), determined to bring change
- Govt. Decided to enforce language policy in 1975 (half subjects in Afr.), students, teachers, parents objected but ignored, teachers fired for not applying policy, students began to boycott classes
- SASM had been working to spread ideas of BC amongst students in Soweto; govt. Banned newsletter, imprisoned/banned leaders
- SASM supported boycotts in 1976, planned demonstration (June 16th)
- Soweto Uprising: students marched with placards, non-violent, gathered at Orlando Stadium in Soweto, met by police using teargas/bullets; caused a wave of riots throughout SA
- Uprising caused protests throughout country, become not only about education but apartheid
- As a result education significantly disrupted

This time is often seen as a ‘turning point’ in South Africa from oppression to democracy. The significances and effects of this movement include:

- Achievement change in language policy, but now had greater goals (end of apartheid)
- Many student leaders detained and killed by state
- Increased support for armed struggle (students fled to ANC/PAC in exile)
- Negative effect on SA’s image, attempt to end isolation failed and business leaders unhappy
- Further oppression: 17 anti-apartheid organisations banned in 77 – SASO, SASM, BPC, SSRC
- Steve Biko killed in police detention
- This protest coincided with: NUSAS (liberal white student, influenced by international revolts, protested against govt security laws and conscription) and the Black Sash (liberal white women protesting against human rights abuses, wrote letters to press, ran legal advice offices etc)